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Foundations of College Writing

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**There is a First for Everything**

It’s family game night. This has been a tradition for the past sixteen years. Tonight is different because this is the first time your boyfriend is coming to your house. As the night continues, everything is going as planned; your mom is winning at monopoly, your dad is complaining that he always gets sent to jail and your little brother is devising a plan to steal everyone’s properties. All of a sudden, things go awry and your parents start to break out the baby pictures. They have the picture of your first steps, your first time at the playground and your first time on the potty. Even though you are mortified, these are moments that you will have with you forever. You have millions of firsts throughout your life. Some have the power to change your life. What makes a first so important?

**My important firsts:**

Going through middle and high school, I was certain that I was going to go to Kutztown University to be a Secondary Education major with a focus in English. I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher and I was always good at English so it just made sense that this was going to be my life. Freshmen year, I took biology and I absolutely hated it. I just was not interested in it. Sophomore year, I had to take chemistry. This was one of the only classes I got a B in. I never thought that I would have an interest in science. But, life is unexpected.

Junior year was going to be the year that I was going to rule the world. I had just gotten over a hard time in my life and I was ready to turn it around. This was the year that I had to take physics and I did not know what to expect. The first thing my teacher asked us is, “What is physics?” I had no idea. She told us that it is the most basic form of science because it is mostly math based. I remember thinking, “I can deal with this”. As the year continued, I realized that I loved physics. It was the first time that I ever felt I was good at science. My senior year, I took AP Physics. Looking around, I noticed that most of the people in the classroom where in the top of my class. They understood everything that was going on and I had no clue. They would tease me because I asked so many questions. My teacher, Ms. Tran, was the most influential teacher that I have ever had. She would stay after class with me until I understood what was going on. One time we stayed after school until five! I ended up having a 99% in that class and I couldn’t have done it without her. You could tell that she genuinely loved her job and she loved physics. She made me realize that I wanted to be like her. This is a first that I will never forget.

College is a place where you experience half of the firsts in your life, and some of the most important. It is the first time you are responsible for yourself and your schooling. I was so excited to start my life. I started out taking a class called Contemporary Physics. Again, I had no idea what to expect. The first day I came into class and sat down. I was nervous because there were only two other girls and about twenty boys. The professor came in and started talking about the different types of physics. Within five minutes I was lost. This was the first time since I decided my major that I had questioned it. This class was not what I expected it to be. There were types of physics that I never even thought about. For a few weeks, I was really questioning what I wanted to do. This is perfectly normal. Who knows what they want to do for the rest of their life at the age of eighteen?

After four long years of college, I will finally be ready to start my life and my career. This is a first that hasn’t happened yet, but I am hoping that it will happen soon. If you are a teacher or future teacher reading this, you will understand what I mean. The first time that I inspire a student will be the best day of my life. Explaining physics to someone can be tricky because it is a lot of memorizing problems and figuring out different ways to use them. I will be looking into a sea of faces and waiting until I see the look that tells me they understand. Nothing is better than the feeling of helping someone else. Besides just helping them understand the curriculum, I want to inspire students to improve their lives. No matter what school district I work in, I know there will be troubled students who don’t want to be there, don’t care or don’t believe in themselves. I believe something as simple as smiling and being kind to them can brighten their day. My teachers inspired me so much. They all cared about their students and what was going on in their personal lives. My school was a family and so many of my teachers helped me through the some of my most difficult years.

**How my firsts taught me about being educated:**

My firsts have taught me a lot about being educated. The first time taking physics taught me that life is not set in stone. I always have had a plan. Since I was four I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. But, I never thought it would science. It taught me that I can still surprise myself. Freshmen year in high school, I had no expectations of myself. I have learned that I can do so much more than I believed. Having faith in your self is part of being educated.

The first time I tell people my major, I get the response, “Physics is so hard, and I could never do it.” After talking about it further, I had realized most people said that they didn’t understand physics and they didn’t have a good teacher. One thing that I have always believed in is that people avoid or judge things that they don’t understand. Even though I have been rethinking my major, these are things that just push me harder to be better. I want my students to accept physics and I want them to understand it. Even if they don’t fall in love with it, I never want them to leave my class room saying that they hated physics. Physics is not something that everyone instantly understands, sometimes it takes a lot of work, but it is so rewarding when you understand it and can connect it to real life situations. This statement could be true for anything in life. If people took the time to understand something, they would see the world in a different way.

Even though my last first hasn’t happened yet, it has already taught me a lot. Sometimes we don’t realize that one person can have the power to change the world. That one person who smiled and said hello might be the person who saves you from having a horrible day. No matter your profession, age, race or gender you can have the power to make life better.

On the day that I was born, I had my very first, first. It was the first time I took a breath. This is the most important first that I will ever have in my life. I wanted to use the quote to show that there are so many firsts in our lives that we tend to forget about the ones that are really important. There is a first for everything and I will continue my life looking forward to all my firsts.